Import of Medical Equipments

2074. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of private organisations which were given excise duty relief for importing medical/ investigative equipments as on date; and

(b) what were the terms and conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D.K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the house.

Increase in Oral Cancer

2075. SHRI SANTOSH, BAGRODIA: Will the Minister, of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the oral cancer is on the increase in India;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the causes and remedy thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D.K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) to (c) The data collected under National Cancer Registry Programme of the Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi do not indicate any increase in the incidence of oral cancer over the years. During the 8th Five Year Plan more emphasis is being given on prevention and early detection of cancer under National Cancer Control Programme. Various health education measures are being taken to educate the people to create awareness amongst them about the likely causes of cancer, including oral cancer. The ill-effects of Tobacco chewing and smoking are suitably highlighted.

Isolation of Hyaluronic Acid

2076. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a senior Scientist at the Eye Research Institute, Harvard Medical School, Boston, in association with the C.S.I.R. Centre for Bio-chemicals, Delhi isolated the chemical known as 'Hyaluronic acids' for the use by opthalmic surgeons to re-place the natural vitreous after retinal operations;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the cataract operation is likely to cost Rs. 50/- instead of Rs. 3,000 by using imported products; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take to manufacture this product indigenously so as to give sight to millions of cataract patients in the country at a low cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D.K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) and (b) Dr. Bireshwar Chakrabarty, a Senior Scientist of the Eye Research Institute, Boston was a visiting Scientist at C.S.I.R. Centre for Bio-chemicals. The Scientists of C.S.I.R. Centre for Bio-chemicals have standardises a process for the isolation of Hyaluronic acids. Hyaluronic acid is used in:

1. Intra ocular Lens Surgery.
2. Corneal Transplantation.
3. Perforating Corneal injuries-repair.

Hyaluronic acid is also used as a substitute to replace natural vitreous. The findings of the process are a subject of patent application and it will not be in public interest to give full details of the process. The product isolated, however, satisfies the chemical and physical properties required for the grade used in ophthalmic surgery.

(c) and (d) Hyaluronic acid is one of the components involved in the total cost of the Cataract surgery. Other costs include intra-ocular lense (if an implant is to be made), Surgeon's charges etc. It is